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CIRCULARS OF INFORMATION  
OF THE  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

No. 5-1879.

AMERICAN EDUCATION AS DESCRIBED BY THE FRENCH COMMISSION  
TO THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1876.

WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1879.

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## LETTER.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
November 15, 1879.

SIR: The government of the French Republic, appreciating the importance of education to the existence and prosperity of a free state, has ever since its establishment given particular attention to the subject. In 1876, an able commission of French school officials and teachers, with the distinguished M. Ferdinand Buisson for its chief, was sent to study the school systems and educational methods of the United States in connection with the Centennial International Exhibition of that year. One result of the commission's labors is an elaborate report (of 702 pages) on our elementary and secondary instruction made to the minister of public instruction, worship, and fine arts, and published under his auspices.<sup>1</sup>

This report is a very remarkable document—philosophical, judicious, acute; the work of men familiar with education at home and eager to study it abroad; instructive to the authors' countrymen in one way and equally to Americans in another; a friendly criticism of some things in American education and a discriminating praise on other points. It has been read in the original by several school officials of prominence, who have unanimously urged me to publish a résumé of its contents in English for the use of educators in this country. With this recommendation my own judgment coincided, and accordingly I have caused the material accompanying this letter to be prepared, always having in view the necessity of being as brief as justice to the original would allow.

I have the honor to recommend its publication as a circular of information; and I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN EATON,  
*Commissioner.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Approved, and publication ordered.

C. SCHURZ,  
*Secretary.*

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<sup>1</sup> Rapport sur l'instruction primaire à l'exposition universelle de Philadelphie en 1876. Présenté à M. le ministre de l'instruction publique au nom de la commission envoyée par le ministère à Philadelphie, par F. Buisson, président de la commission. Ouvrage publié sous les auspices du ministère de l'instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts. Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1878.





## THE FRENCH COMMISSION ON AMERICAN EDUCATION.

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### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF THE COMMISSION.

Before giving an account of their work, the undersigned take pleasure in expressing here their sincere gratitude for the hearty welcome they received from the school authorities at the Philadelphia Exhibition and in all the different institutions of learning they visited.

At Philadelphia, West Chester, Kutztown, Pittsburgh, Washington, Boston, New York, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Chicago, and Milwaukee, as well as in localities of less importance which one or more members of the commission have had the opportunity to visit, they found the same courteous readiness not only to give the commissioners access to the schools, but also to facilitate the accomplishment of their task by abundant information, by intelligent explanations, by the completeness of the documents generously placed at their disposal, and by the entire cordiality with which they were invited to see and examine everything themselves, their attention being called not only to the merits but also to the defects of the school system. The commissioners take the liberty to thank in particular and publicly Mr. John Eaton, the eminent director of the National Bureau of Education; Mr. William Wood, president of the New York City board of education; and Messrs. Philbrick, Wickersham, Kiddle, Pickard, Rickoff, MacAlister, Harris, and Phelps, superintendents of schools who will be mentioned frequently in this report and who have been guides at once trustworthy and courteous.

The same grateful acknowledgment is tendered to the school authorities of Canada. Two of the commissioners who visited several cities and rural districts of the province of Ontario and the two largest cities of the province of Quebec received such a hearty welcome that they will keep that country in grateful remembrance.

Signed by the members of the commission: F. Buisson,<sup>1</sup> B. Berger, E. Laporte, Olagnier, A. Valens, Rauber.

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<sup>1</sup>The Commissioner believes that the American people will be pleased to know something further of M. Ferdinand Buisson, chief author of the report in question. Attracting, while still youthful, the attention of the French government, M. Buisson was selected by M. Jules Simon, minister of public instruction, for the responsible position of special delegate to the Vienna Exhibition in 1873. M. Buisson was to study the educational systems of the countries there represented and to report upon the same after his return. His report, which appeared in 1875, comprised 360 pages of valuable information, the United States receiving special attention. Shortly after its publication, M. Buisson was appointed inspector of primary schools.

## DIVISION OF THE WORK.

The following list gives the subject of each chapter and the name of the commissioner to whom each subject was assigned for examination and report :

- CHAPTER I.—The free school system.—*Buisson.*  
 CHAPTER II.—School organization and administration.—*Laporte.*  
 CHAPTER III.—Public school finances.—*Laporte.*  
 CHAPTER IV.—City schools.—*Laporte.*  
 CHAPTER V.—Country schools.—*Laporte.*  
 CHAPTER VI.—Coeducation.—*Buisson.*  
 CHAPTER VII.—Primary education in the Southern States.—*Buisson.*  
 CHAPTER VIII.—School-houses and school furniture.—*Berger.*  
 CHAPTER IX.—Infant schools, Kindergärten, and primary schools.—*Berger.*  
 CHAPTER X.—Reading.—*Valens.*  
 CHAPTER XI.—Writing.—*Valens.*  
 CHAPTER XII.—Instruction in the vernacular.—*Berger.*

By law of June 26, 1876, the minister of public instruction, M. Waddington, was authorized to appoint an educational delegation to the Philadelphia Exhibition, and to spend for the purpose 25,000 francs. M. Buisson was selected for the most important position in the delegation, the presidency, and five other educators were appointed his associates.

M. Buisson made an exhaustive study of education at the Centennial and in the United States at large, the result of which is embodied in a report of some 700 pages. In addition, he published translations of pupils' work at the Centennial, covering 508 pages of specimens. The appreciation of his services was expressed by his renewed appointment to positions of great responsibility.

In 1878, he was made inspector general of primary schools and also secretary of the statistical commission charged with the preparation of decennial statistics of primary education in France. The first volume of these statistics, already published, covers 289 large quarto pages.

Besides these numerous duties, M. Buisson found time to prepare, in company with four other eminent educators, the following works: *Devoirs d'écoliers étrangers à l'Exposition de Paris*, *Devoirs d'écoliers français à l'Exposition de Paris*, and *Travaux d'instituteurs à l'Exposition de Paris*.

M. Buisson was moreover one of the most active promoters of the organization of "conferences" for the 12,000 teachers invited by the French government to visit the Paris Exposition. The reports of the conferences have been printed, and we find M. Buisson represented in the volume by a conference on the intuitive method which covers 37 pages.

When an educational museum was to be established by the government, there was no one so competent to organize the same as M. Buisson; indeed, he succeeded in accomplishing more in a few months than other countries have done in years. The *Musée pédagogique* of Paris is an established fact, a result largely due to the zeal of M. Buisson.

In addition to these achievements, we see M. Buisson, during the busy year of 1878, undertake the publication of a "*Dictionnaire de pédagogie*," of which 32 pages are to appear twice a month.

On the resignation, last fall, of the highly esteemed and very able director of primary education in the ministry of public instruction, M. Boutan, a successor had to be appointed. No one was surprised that M. Buisson was selected for the place, especially at a time when a thorough reorganization of education is the programme of the republican government.

CHAPTER XIII.—Geography.—*Buisson*.

CHAPTER XIV.—History and government.—*Buisson*.

CHAPTER XV.—Arithmetic.—*Olagnier*.

CHAPTER XVI.—Bookkeeping, algebra, geometry, and geometrical drawing.—*Olagnier*.

CHAPTER XVII.—Physical and natural sciences.—*Valens*.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Drawing and the historical development of methods of teaching it.—*Berger*.

CHAPTER XIX.—Drawing in primary schools, with specimens of pupils' work.—*Rauber*.

CHAPTER XX.—Singing and music.—*Valens*.

CHAPTER XXI.—Gymnastics.—*Rauber*.

CHAPTER XXII.—Religious instruction.—*Buisson*.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Moral education.—*Buisson*.

CHAPTER XXIV.—High schools.—*Buisson*.

CHAPTER XXV.—Normal schools.—*Berger*.

CHAPTER XXVI.—Teachers' institutes, examination of teachers.—*Berger*.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Auxiliaries to the school system.—*Berger*.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—Private schools.—*Rauber*.

CHAPTER XXIX.—School statistics.—*Buisson* and *Laporte*.

CHAPTER XXX.—Résumé and conclusions.—*Buisson*.

#### THE FREE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

"A republican government needs the whole power of education." These words of Montesquieu have, perhaps, never found a more striking application than in the subject which we are now about to consider. If there be a nation which has expected everything from this power of education, which has intimately united its national destinies with the development of its schools, which has made public instruction the supreme guarantee of its liberties, the condition of its prosperity, and the safeguard of its institutions, that nation certainly is the people of the United States.

The peculiar position assigned to the school in American social life has always been one of the first points to attract the attention of foreigners.

The great zeal for the education of the young which grows as the population increases, penetrates into the public mind more and more, and manifests itself in more and more decided ways. What may have seemed at first a transient glow of enthusiasm, a generous impulse, has in time assumed all the force of a logical conviction or rather of a positive certainty. It is no longer a movement of a few philanthropists or of a few religious societies, but it is an essential part of the public administration for which the States, the cities, and townships appropriate every year more money than any other country in the world has hitherto devoted to the education of the people. Far from limiting this generosity as much as possible to primary instruction, it goes so far as to declare free for all not only primary but even secondary schools.

The laws and customs of the country are in perfect harmony in regard to this practice; public opinion approves and even insists upon these sacrifices, so evident has it become to every one that the future of the American people will be whatever its schools make it.

Among the many influences which gave the American school this unique importance, the influence of Protestant ideas was one of the first. The early settlers of New England did not recognize a more important duty or a greater privilege than that of reading the Bible. The first charter of every settlement compelled it to establish schools and compelled every family to educate its children.

As soon as democratic institutions were more fully developed, the former religious duty became gradually a political necessity. The form of the United States Government established a hundred years ago, making everything depend upon the will of the people, assumes that will to be enlightened as the only safeguard against the worst calamities.

The United States have been peopled by continuous immigration. But what does this immigration bring to the country? People of different origins, classes, and religions. The many thousands that arrive have frequently nothing in common except the desire which animates nearly all immigrants, viz, to improve their condition. No previous education has prepared them for this new political and social government which was not intended for them; for what could less resemble the Puritan colonists of New England than the heterogeneous, unstable, and ignorant mass which constitutes the greater part of the immigration? These are the elements of which a nation has to be made; without roughly assailing, too, the veneration immigrants feel for any former national or religious customs, all must be "Americanized" as fast as possible. It is necessary that within one or two generations the Irish, Germans, French, Scandinavians, Spaniards, shall not have the slightest inclination to constitute nations within the nation, but that they shall all have become Americans themselves, and be proud of being so.

What is the cause of this wonderful transformation? What instrumentality infuses American blood into the veins of these thousands of people who have hardly had time to forget Europe? Every statesman will tell you, "It is the public school;" and this single service which the school renders to the nation is considered by many Americans sufficient to justify all the expense it involves. Suppose the immigrants were left to their own inspirations, and instead of public schools should find only private institutions; everything would be different: each person would keep up his own customs or preferences; each group would constitute itself separately, preserve its own language, traditions, religious customs, its old national spirit, and its prejudices. In denominational schools the distinction between rich and poor, paying and non-paying pupils, would necessarily be perpetuated and emphasized. \* \* \* And without fusion of races, without a uniform language, without equality of social classes, without reciprocal toleration among the different denominations, and, above all, without an ardent love for the new country and its institutions, would the United States still be united?

That this country has become and that it remains what it is, is literally

due to the public school. But in proportion as the public school grows the dangers that threaten it are increasing.

It is asserted nowadays, at least in the Northern and Eastern States, that the native American population does not increase nearly as rapidly as the population of foreign or mixed parentage. Whether the cause of this is to be sought in what General Walker describes by the words "careful avoidance of family increase," or in a physiological degeneration of the race, as some scientists assert, it is not impossible to foresee the time at which the American element, properly so called, will be in a minority; and, although this time may still be distant, the United States have an evident interest in not neglecting anything which will imbue the adopted population with the American spirit. In the absence of a sufficient number of direct descendants, the American Republic increases the number of her children by adoption, and if these are not hers by blood, she is determined that they shall be hers in spirit and in heart, and this she accomplishes by means of the public schools.

But this is not all. Not only is the race menaced, but also the public spirit, the spirit of American institutions, the very soul of the Republic. We are not of those who, overlooking the prodigious proofs of material and moral vitality which the United States have manifested, do their utmost to discover in this great body germs of decomposition or delight in predicting its approaching ruin. We do not forget that this nation has in its immense territory the greatest resources of natural wealth, in its character the most powerful impulse toward activity, in its historical traditions the most noble and lasting example of energy, labor, courage, and national honor, and political institutions the most favorable to its free development. These are the forces which are to resist the most formidable attacks. But while our faith in the destiny of the United States is unshaken, we cannot ignore the formidable problems which that country has still to solve.

Before the United States reached the first centenary of their independence they witnessed the beginning of a crisis; and who knows when it will end? The civil war has left marks of the explosion of the evil, but the war is over and the evil still exists. The antagonism of races, traditions, and interests which led to this bloody duel between the North and the South; the irruption of the negroes into public life, which, although just, was nevertheless a terrible chastisement for the injustice of a century; the difficulty of maintaining for a long period the ties which connect in an extensive territory people differing as much as those of New England, the Southern, the Western, and Northwestern States, and the States on the Pacific coast—all these burning questions of American politics are so serious that Americans themselves no longer try to ignore them. These questions are, however, kept in the background by a more vital yet almost intangible danger: the change, or rather the corruption of politics.

The writer mentions with disapproval the practice of removing

officials for purely political causes, and refers those of his readers who desire more information on this subject to the work on the executive power in the United States, published in 1876, by Monsieur de Chambrun, of Paris;<sup>1</sup> he also quotes the report of a congressional committee on election frauds, and cites Daniel Webster, who saw in the public schools a remedy for such evils. He then continues as follows:

Americans are led to believe the more in this slow remedy, because they best feel the gravity of the situation. When a nation has left during forty years the control of public affairs to a class of men not equal to the task, it is not the work of a day to remedy the evil. It would be necessary for the best part of the population to make great efforts to regain possession of the government; but how can this be accomplished?

There remains but one remedy, the slow working of time and education; and the citizens who are at present discouraged and resigned to the transient domination of politicians are precisely those who place most confidence in the future. They flatter themselves that by a better training of the rising generation, and by giving the children of the lower social classes an education worthy of free citizens, they will gradually diminish both the number of intriguers and the number of dupes. This preoccupation, which, in the absence of anything better, is a sort of American patriotism, contributes more than we are able to tell to keep up interest in the schools.

The unanimity of effort which the cause of popular education generally evokes results from these differing and to some extent contradictory springs of action. This is the only question which no one ignores. The optimists, those who are still too proud of their country to let anything shake their confidence in the great destinies of the Union, see in the public school one of the glories of America which it is of importance to preserve in its splendor. Others, who feel anxious for the fate of the Republic, also take an interest in the school; it is the last cherished hope they will part with. And the extreme pessimists say, If the country can be saved, it will be by its schools.

If the political future of the United States depends on the efficiency of her schools, her commercial future is no less directly interested. The conditions of labor in the New World are such that success depends, as it were, on a certain degree of education. In industrial, commercial, agricultural, financial, or other occupations, the success of each will be almost in proportion to his intelligence. No one finds his career definitely marked out. If it is becoming rare in the Old World to see sons follow the profession of their fathers during several generations, in the United States it is still more exceptional. The spirit of initiative, of enterprise, of adventure, even, is the result of this entirely new civilization; there is no America without the "go ahead." Work without any other aim

<sup>1</sup> *Le pouvoir exécutif aux États-Unis, étude de droit constitutionnel*, par Adolphe de Chambrun. Paris, 1876.

than a moderate salary, the humble prospect of a life of toil, is not the ideal of the American. No people works more, but, also, no other people attaches a higher value to its labor than the American people. What Europeans call Yankee greed or speculation is nothing but the effect of this intelligence which accompanies their work and of the high price which they demand for their labor. "To be content with little," advice of ancient philosophy, finds no credit in the New World. Under these circumstances education has a double value: it has besides its real value a kind of surplus value, resulting from its practical and commercial usefulness. The whole political economy of the United States takes this for granted; without it, neither the farmer nor the business man would be able to calculate his chances of success; the artisan and the laborer would not endeavor to improve their work, to lessen their hardships, or to increase their profits. The wealth of the United States is incalculable precisely because intellectual wealth counts for an enormous proportion. We sometimes think that the eagerness of the Americans to support and improve schools is a kind of national pride, vanity, or show. Not at all. It is a calculation, and a sound one; enormous advances are made, but it is known that they will be returned a hundredfold.

In 1870 the United States Bureau of Education sent several thousand circulars to workmen, employers, and observers who were supposed to know the condition of the working classes. These circulars solicited information in regard to difference of skill, aptitude, or amount of work executed by persons employed which arose from a difference in their education and independent of their natural abilities; whether those who could read and write showed any greater skill, and how such skill tends to increase their wages; whether they are more economical; whether, finally, educated laborers were preferred. The answers sent to the Bureau of Education are most interesting. With one exception, all the correspondents recommend, for economical reasons, the education of the people, because, they say, intelligence increases the value of manual labor. The only exception was in the planters of the Southern States, who were almost all opposed to the education of the negroes. Some asserted that the colored people are not fit for education or civilization; others, that the negroes do not need education, and that the more they resemble beasts of burden the more easily they can be made to work.

Besides political and economical motives, there is still another, the moral motive, which must encourage the United States in their zeal for public education. If the Americans expect their public schools to prepare citizens who shall be permeated with the national spirit, it is not less necessary that the young generation be imbued with sufficient moral principles; and to accomplish this the school is the principal, often the surest, instrumentality.

From a variety of causes, family ties are far less strong in the United States than in Europe. The frequent separation of the parents which

results from commercial and agricultural occupations in an immense territory; the feverish zeal of many fathers in business; the general spirit of independence; the custom of self government which the young American draws, as it were, from the air he inhales; the custom which excuses even young women from asking the permission of their parents for most of their actions; and from giving an account thereof; the laws, finally, which sanction the existing customs, frequently shorten the duration of childhood and weaken parental authority. These are some of the causes which have greatly reduced the moral influence of the family. Does the school supply this want of moral and domestic education? It is difficult to believe that it supplies it entirely, but it certainly does partially. The children of the lower classes will learn at school how to behave and will lose some of the rudeness of their manners. In school they hear the duties of respectable people authoritatively explained and receive moral directions of an elementary character for practical life; here they are trained to be members of a civilized country. This training is all the more necessary because thousands of European immigrants have in this respect everything to learn. Would it be proper for the United States to let the different denominations take care of the civilization and moral training of these ignorant masses? Certainly not; for those who need civilization most are precisely those who are without the influence of the churches; the object, moreover, of the churches is not to make citizens for the state, but converts to creeds. Not even the Sunday school has this in view; it limits its instructions to particular religious tenets held by its sect. It is thus the public day school which has to accomplish this work, and nobody calls this privilege in question.

The foregoing considerations would seem to lead to the conclusion that the American school is, more than any other public establishment, entirely in the hands of the state. This is, however, not at all the case. The Federal Government does not interfere with the schools at all; the Constitution does not even authorize it to do so. The States interfere only so far as general school legislation is concerned, and leave to the different localities liberty to organize and manage their schools as they please. If we find the American schools, especially in the Northern and Western States, in a flourishing condition, it is not that the real usefulness of the schools is appreciated by those who govern, but by those who are governed, and because the various municipalities feel themselves obliged—not by a law emanating from a central authority, but by what is a great deal stronger, the will of the people, the pressure of local interests—to establish and to support schools in conformity with the wants of the country. This gives the school system in the United States an immovable stability. The custom of leaving the care of public education to the local authorities is, however, not an isolated fact in the social organization of America. In principle, the Constitution of the United States confers on the Central Government no power which it *does not absolutely need* either for the defense of the collective interest of the Union, for intercourse with foreign powers, or for the subordina-



tion of the several States constituting the Union. Beyond these three cases, the Central Government is not to interfere. This does not mean that the Federal Government is indifferent to education. It had, on the contrary, provided for its future support before even the municipalities took hold of it. The Government waived the privilege of directing the management of schools after it had assured their success from a material point of view by devoting valuable lands to their support.

The writer here explains how the land grants were made by the Federal Government.

Thus far all movements having for object to give the Federal Government a more or less direct control over educational affairs have been promptly rejected by Congress and an almost unanimous public opinion.

The United States have no minister of public instruction, and they cannot have any. Until a few years ago it was utterly impossible to obtain comparative school reports from the United States; it was even impossible to ascertain the exact number of schools, teachers, and pupils, the total amount of school expenditures, the proportion of illiterates, or any other statistical information relative to schools. This condition of affairs finally aroused the friends of public education, and in 1866 the National Education Association, assembled at Washington, requested Congress to establish a "central office of educational information." Congress granted this request, and Dr. Henry Barnard, of Connecticut, was appointed first Commissioner of Education. This eminent gentleman, however, for want of support, failed to organize the Bureau as he desired, and he consequently resigned. After some interruption, and after new efforts by educational societies, the work was resumed and intrusted to a man of incontestable ability, Mr. John Eaton, formerly superintendent of schools of Tennessee, and during the civil war general in the Federal Army.

Here follows the biography of General Eaton, translated from the American Educational Annual for 1875.

Thanks to the cordial support of President Grant and other prominent men, General Eaton has made the Bureau a success. He has had the annual appropriations increased, which are, however, still very small; he has organized the publication of two series of valuable documents corresponding with the double purpose of the Bureau: first, the annual reports, containing the statistics and abstracts of school reports of the whole Union, and offering comparative résumés of official documents of the several States; secondly, the circulars of information, intended to give accounts of the condition of education in all parts of the world, and to lay before educators valuable statistics, and historical, general, and special pedagogical essays.

Here follows a list of the documents published by the Bureau.

But, even with the aid of the Bureau of Education, it is still very difficult for foreigners, and perhaps still more for Americans, to form a correct idea of the true condition of education in the United States. It is

easy to see what the model establishments in some of the larger cities are doing; but it is almost impossible to get acquainted with the very numerous systems of organization and management of schools in the many districts and villages and to prepare a summary of the results. These multitudes of schools have nothing in common except the "American spirit;" but under how many forms does this "spirit" manifest itself! It is, therefore, necessary in every work on American education to beware of generalizations.

#### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

The writer divides his subject as follows: Territorial division of the United States, organization of the different school administrations, the National Bureau of Education as a purely statistical centre, the State county, and local school boards, the classification of schools, and the organization of State, county, and city superintendence.

The National Bureau of Education at Washington has no dictatory power over the schools. It does not constitute an independent department or ministry, being but a bureau of the Department of the Interior. The library is almost unique as to completeness in its specialty. It contains selected works on the history and art of education in the United States and abroad, documents relating to public schools, academies, colleges, and special professional schools. Two of the most important features of the collection are (1) the educational journals published in the United States, and (2) the reports on public education in the States and Territories, together with reports from all classes of schools; there are reports on orphan and other charitable schools and on reform schools; finally, we find the school laws of the different States and the most important pedagogical works. There can also be found a full collection of reports on education in foreign countries. The richest part of the foreign accumulations in this library are from England, Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, the English colonies, Brazil, and the Argentine Republic. We were glad to notice all the publications of the French ministry of public instruction and of several of our learned societies. General Eaton and his co-laborers requested us to explain to our school authorities, societies, and school publishers how beneficial a regular exchange of educational documents would be to both countries. They sincerely desire the realization of the views expressed by M. Buisson in the report on the Vienna Exhibition in regard to definitely organizing an international educational exchange. Another section of this library contains cyclopædias and many foreign and domestic reference books, among which the German works are especially numerous. The library is thus a permanent source of rich and varied information.

Here follows an account of the powers of the State boards of education and of the State superintendents. The writer quotes the school law of *Pennsylvania*. Respecting State superintendents' reports, he says:

The reading of the annual reports of the State superintendents is of exceptional interest. The progress, the results, the wants, and the methods of public education are discussed with an elevation of view, a sincerity, and an intelligence that we cannot fail to admire. We do not find in these documents, as it is thought in Europe, a continual glorification of American institutions, but a conscientious self examination, made in public and for the public.

Here follows an extract from Dr. Wickersham's report for 1875. The writer then gives two tables respecting State and county superintendents, and he explains the powers and duties of county and local school boards and superintendents, the mode of appointing teachers, and the duties of teachers. Respecting compulsory and free education he says:

There are two questions in the American school organization which invite special attention, compulsory and free instruction. The unfortunate consequences of non-attendance on schools or of insufficient and irregular attendance have always engaged the attention of the statesmen and best citizens of the American Union. The fact that immigration brings every year a large number of foreign families to the large cities greatly increases the number of illiterate and truant children. Cries of alarm are heard on all sides; the legislatures are requested to provide the measures indispensable to public security and social order, and there are many who see no remedy except in compulsory education. Twelve States and three Territories have passed compulsory school laws; in other States the authorities are waiting until public opinion shall pronounce itself in favor of compulsion and provide sufficient means to make it effective. They know too well that it would be imprudent to promulgate a law which, ignoring real difficulties now in the way of its execution, might be violated with impunity.

Here the writer quotes the law of Massachusetts of 1642 relative to obligatory education and extracts from State reports relative to school attendance in the States of Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, California, Michigan, New Hampshire, and New Jersey.

In the States where compulsory school laws exist frequent violations are reported. After consulting many school reports, we came to the conclusion that the unsatisfactory results are not due to the principle of compulsion—which, on the contrary, we think excellent, and which has materially improved the condition of schools—but we ascribe it to three distinct causes: first, the weakening of respect for authority in the United States, resulting partly, in our opinion, from the too prevalent custom of electing public officers; secondly, the bad management of country schools and the lowering of the standard of their course of study through the too frequent change of teachers; thirdly, insufficient school accommodations, great distances of the schools from the homes of children, and bad condition of roads.

Despite these difficulties, several of the most enlightened States seem to be disposed to pass compulsory school laws. The superintendents

o these States call attention to the dangers of ignorance and truancy, dangers, they say, which must be combated at any risk in a country in which every citizen has a part of the public power.

Here follows a table showing the constitutional and legal provisions relative to primary education in the various States.

Gratuitous education is not limited to the primary school, but extends over grammar and high schools. The nation can thus say to all its children, "As I offer you gratuitously the benefits of a liberal education, all careers are open to you. There are no longer disinherited children among you. It is therefore your duty to make an intelligent use of your education, and so adorn your life by serving God and your country."

The writer closes by quoting from the report of Francis Adams (*Free School System of the United States*, London, 1875) the opinions of various superintendents relative to gratuitous education.

#### PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCES.

In Chapter III the writer gives an account of school finances and of the gifts made for educational purposes. This account is taken from the reports of the United States Commissioner of Education.

#### SCHOOL ORGANIZATION—CITY SCHOOLS.

The writer quotes from various city reports the rules and regulations adopted by the school boards, the courses of study, and the various methods of disciplining and of exciting the emulation of pupils. Concerning the courses of study and the division of the time for recitation, he says :

An elementary class, even in the cities, has at least three divisions, sometimes even five, in a class not exceeding 45 pupils. But while in France it is a principle to have but three divisions and to unite these as much as possible for collective lessons in reading, writing, history, &c., which allows a subject to be treated at suitable length, this combination is rarely admitted in America. \* \* \* For sessions of two hours and a half we have counted as many as fourteen distinct exercises in elementary classes in cities and in rural schools; this number falls to seven in the grammar schools, but at least half the scholars are either not occupied at all or are not advantageously engaged while the others are reciting. \* \* \* This seems to be the weak point in the American school organization. \* \* \* We are told that "the pupils are studying." But how?—not systematically, not under supervision, we fear. The use of copies must amount to an abuse, and, what is more serious, there is no opportunity allowed to develop in the children their powers of reasoning and observation.

Giving the arrangement of classes in Aurora, Ill., and Indianapolis, Ind., as least objectionable, the writer continues concerning directions for teachers:

There is no programme of studies among those which we have examined to which is not added, as a supplement, a series of directions for the teachers. Composed by the most competent men, they show the teachers how to apply the programmes and how to give their lessons; finally, they establish in the school system a uniformity of action which assures a regular method of teaching and renders the control of the inspectors more efficacious.

The most noteworthy of these directions are, in our opinion, those arranged for the schools of Philadelphia, Columbus, New Bedford, New York, Boston, Aurora, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Fort Wayne. We give, as a specimen, the directions of Philadelphia.

Here follows a translation of the directions for the Philadelphia teachers. Concerning methods of discipline, the writer quotes from the reports of Pennsylvania, Milwaukee, Manchester, R. I., Warren, R. I., New Bedford, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Washington, and Cincinnati. He mentions competitive examinations (monthly and yearly), honor rolls, medals, reports of standing, &c., as among the devices used for the stimulation of pupils.

#### SCHOOL ORGANIZATION—COUNTRY SCHOOLS.

Respecting the real condition of country schools, the writer presents a gloomy picture taken from the report for 1874 of Superintendent Bateman, of Illinois, adding that several of the other State superintendents concur in admitting its accuracy.

The writer then gives a translation of the directions for teachers written by Superintendent S. C. Macpherson, of Wayne County, Ind., of which he says:

The originality of form and the conciseness of expression add to the merits of this document.

To illustrate in what manner the half yearly reports are arranged, the writer gives a translation of the report of George N. Pollock, a teacher in the Bedminster district of Bucks County, Pa., to the county superintendent. Concerning ungraded country schools the writer remarks:

The characteristic trait of the country school is the absence of a regular organization. In the absence of sufficient official information on this subject we are unable to give a general idea of the condition of these schools. None but Americans could give satisfactory information on this topic. The opinion of one of them, Professor Phelps, of Wisconsin, is not very favorable to the country schools. The candor with which the existing evils are pointed out encourages the hope that vigorous efforts will be made to remedy them. The country superintendents are especially active. They insist upon a systematic organization of the schools, they require reports from every teacher, and they see that their instructions are carried out. We have read many of the county

superintendents' reports with great interest, because we feel that they are written by enlightened and trustworthy men.

The writer next considers the character of the buildings in which country schools are taught:

We are pained to detract from the charming picture of American country school-houses with which some enthusiastic travelers have made us acquainted. We have traversed vast plains where the settlers have to struggle against an indomitable vegetation; we have seen the iron, oil, and coal regions, and we have never met there such school-houses as we had imagined. The stone or brick building constitutes the exception, the frame house, which is so cold in winter and so hot in summer, is more frequent, and the log school-house has not yet disappeared. Even in the most flourishing States, many complaints are made in regard to defective accommodations. We are not describing here exceptional cases, we are trying, on the contrary, to do justice to this great country; but we must not conceal the fact that the schools in the rural districts are poor and badly arranged. In Pennsylvania and New Hampshire reports, the only States that exhibited documents on this subject, we find in fourteen out of twenty-two reports complaints of teachers who have absolutely no school apparatus. The salaries of country school teachers are so low that our French teachers have no reason to envy them.

The courses of study in country schools are still at their first attempts. There is no uniformity whatever; every teacher makes his own course and prescribes its duration.

Here the writer gives the course of study of the ungraded schools of Beaver and Perry Counties, Pennsylvania.

Besides this pedagogical anarchy, the country schools suffer from irregular attendance. Both teachers and superintendents complain bitterly. In order to remedy the evil to some extent and to increase the attendance without depriving the parents entirely of the help of their children, there have been established in several States half time schools. This measure has produced good results everywhere, and it would, perhaps, be advantageous to introduce it into our French system, at least for the summer months, if it be applied to the older pupils.

Here follows a list showing the number of graded and ungraded country schools in Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Oregon.

#### COEDUCATION.

Among the peculiarities of the American school system, the almost universal custom of teaching in the same school both boys and girls is probably least understood. Mixed schools are found in every country; even in France we have about 20,000. But in France and other European countries the mixed school is considered a makeshift, an inferior and provisional kind of school, a necessary economy, especially in

rural districts. In the United States, as elsewhere, the establishment of the mixed school has often been not so much the result of a system as of circumstances. The children of a settlement are sometimes too few in number to be separated by sexes; one school-house, one class, and one teacher suffice for their education. But what is remarkable is that the schools in the United States remained mixed even after they had become developed, multiplied, and richer. In many places the separate system was tried for a short period, and as it was not found satisfactory the mixed school system was reestablished. It exists at present in the great majority of city and country schools. The Americans have a deliberate preference for the mixed system. The main cause of this is that the school in the United States is above all a national institution: it forms not only men but American citizens; it is, as it were, a social mould of wonderful power—whatever may be the elements thrown into it, German or Irish, French or Spanish, only Americans ever come out of it. Now, one of the characteristic traits of American society is the great consideration everywhere shown women. This is shown not only in the manners of the people but in the large number of employments open to women, and it is to this general condition of American customs that this coeducation corresponds.

Take no matter what American book or paper speaking of coeducation, you will always find in substance the same arguments in favor of it. Why, they say, should boys and girls not be educated together, since they have to live together? A French mother would not fail to raise objections. \* \* \* The two great objections, one moral, the other intellectual, which are allowed against the system, are considered visionary in most American families.

We do not find there those close family ties which have such a charm in Europe. Parental authority does not exist at all, or is no longer what it is in our country. Those who have occupied themselves with education in the United States affirm that they have always observed that the union of boys and girls in primary schools is beneficial to both sexes. The boys become gentler in their manner, the girls more serious and industrious. Accustomed to live side by side, they are not more in danger than brothers and sisters in a family. As children they are not surprised at working and playing in common; as youths they continue together without surprise or difficulty; this intercourse, not being new, awakens no new emotions. The only dangers which cannot be warded off are those which human nature cannot prevent. \* \* \* We have heard quoted twenty times while in the United States these words of Jean Paul: "The best guarantee of good conduct is the education of the two sexes in common; two boys in a school will preserve twelve girls, and vice versa. But I guarantee nothing in a school in which there are only girls, and still less in the school in which there are only boys."

While the early development of boys and girls may properly be con-

ducted in the same way, it would seem that girls should also be instructed in woman's future work, *e. g.*, sewing.

The Americans themselves are not of one opinion respecting coeducation beyond the grammar school. We have collected, with great interest, some of the arguments for and against coeducation in high schools. It is remarkable that the moral question, which would be raised first in our country, concerns Americans least of all. But there are besides other dangers, which have given rise to lively discussions. It is said that the female pupils of the high schools are overworked. We noticed, when visiting the schools, a general look of fatigue and pallor among the girls of New England.

Here follows a series of American opinions on this subject, especially the opinions of the late Dr. Clarke of Boston, President White, Dr. Fairchild, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

#### PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

The writer gives an account of the efforts of the American Missionary Society and of several private benefactors for the establishment of schools for colored children. Concerning the intelligence of the colored children, he says:

There is a question which a foreigner never fails to ask when he visits the schools for colored children which are becoming numerous in the Southern, the Western, and even in the Central States; this question is, "Are these children as intelligent, as susceptible of education, as the children of the white race?" The study and the definition of the characteristic differences between the children of the two races is one of the subjects which we hear very often discussed in conversation and which is found in many educational journals. We must decline to discuss the question here, as our observations can only be superficial and incomplete. We have been present during long recitations in colored schools, and we assuredly find the spirit, the tone, the manners, and the physiognomy of the classes different from the schools of Boston and New York. We still remember our visit to the Sumner School at Washington, where teachers and pupils are either colored or of mixed origin. It would certainly be difficult to find more animated, more lively, and more cheerful classes, more sprightly faces, a more attentive curiosity, more sensible answers, or a more ardent desire for education on the part both of teachers and of pupils. Similar remarks could be made of several colored schools in the Western States, *e. g.*, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The pupils' work exhibited at Philadelphia by these schools manifested a vivacity of imagination, a clearness of intellect, and a facility of assimilation which seem to contradict the pretended intellectual inferiority of the colored race. It is nevertheless asserted that if the negro, properly speaking, is examined in all the rudeness of the primitive type, as he is found in the two Carolinas, the parallel cannot be drawn; in these the



intellect remains lively and mercurial, but limited, narrow, and incapable of effort, self activity, and discipline.

Whatever the opinions on this subject may be, we leave the solution of this problem to others; but we cannot help remarking that the education of the negroes is a very recent experiment, hardly a few years old; that up to the present day everything that assures success has been wanting: good teachers, good programmes, favorable material, and moral conditions, and even family influence, for the schools have hitherto had, as it were, only the offspring of slaves or enfranchised slaves. One generation is not too long a time in which to efface the traces of a slavery of two or three hundred years' standing, and it would be fair to allow at least such a space of time before pronouncing a definite judgment.

We know, however, that in a number of central and western cities and in New England the colored children are at present admitted to the ordinary public schools. We always noticed them while visiting the schools, and more than once the principal of the school or the class teacher was pleased to point out to us colored children in the first rank of the pupils for their intelligence, their work, and their conduct. The prejudices which were so lively ten years ago, the feeling of contempt for and repulsion against the negro, are disappearing; if not in the Southern States, where bitter recollections will perhaps keep them up a long time, at least in the other States of the Union; and the public school chiefly contributes to bring about this happy result.

Here the writer gives an account of the Peabody fund, and he then quotes extensively from the southern school reports.

#### SCHOOL-HOUSES AND SCHOOL FURNITURE.

The writer gives extracts and illustrations from American reports showing the condition of educational buildings in various parts of the country, and he passes in review the different specimens of school furniture used in American schools. Among his critical remarks the following are the most striking:

In New York we found the class rooms too small for the number of pupils, and the sanitary rules, especially in regard to ventilation, not strictly observed. We prefer the school-houses of Boston, Providence, St. Louis, and Chicago, and, above all, Cleveland. Philadelphia has no uniform school-houses. They are, as a rule, badly arranged; the class rooms are small, and the light does not enter conveniently. We do not hesitate to place Cleveland in the first rank in regard to school-houses.

The Americans bestow great care upon school furniture. They like comfort, and they want to give the children as much of it while attending school as they enjoy at home.

## INFANT SCHOOLS, KINDERGÄRTEN, AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Concerning the number of Kindergärten, the writer reproduces statistics from the Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1875. Then follows a series of American opinions on Kindergarten training, a list of Kindergarten literature, published by E. Steiger in New York, and, finally, the programme of studies assigned to the primary schools of Cincinnati, Ohio.

## READING.

The writer gives an account of the principal spelling, phonic, and word methods of reading used in the United States. Among those mentioned are the methods of Dr. Edwin Leigh, Monroe, MacGuffey, Knell and Jones, Sargent and May, Sheldon, Hillard and Campbell, Douai, J. M. Watson, and Webb.

## WRITING.

Chapter XI illustrates the principal methods of teaching penmanship used in American schools.

## INSTRUCTION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE.

Chapter XII contains the opinions of several American educators relative to instruction in the vernacular and extracts from text books used in American schools.

## GEOGRAPHY.

Geography has long been one of the favorite branches of study in American schools. It could not be otherwise in a country which has so many reasons for applying itself to this science: the immense extent of its territory; the great diversity of its regions, its resources, and its population; the importance of its commercial relations with the entire world, without speaking of the relations with the mother countries, the result of which is that no country, no spot on the earth as it were, is entirely unrelated to the United States.

The writer gives an account of the methods employed in the United States, and quotes the opinion of Dr. Wickersham relative to the first instruction in geography. He describes the maps and atlases of Guyot, Warren, Mitchell, Harper, Swinton, and Monteith, and the pupils' work exhibited at the Centennial by the States of New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin.

## HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT.

Chapter XIV is a short description of the methods of teaching history and government in American schools. The writer mentions the methods

of Stewart, J. Clark Ridpath, Anderson, Barnes, Wickersham, White, M. G. Martin, Calvin Townsend, and others.

#### ARITHMETIC.

In Chapter XV the writer describes the methods of Grube, Warren Colburn, Olney, Brooks, Stoddard, French, White, J. S. Eaton, Robinson, Sanford, Peck, Ray, and others. He also gives a translation of the examination questions of various city schools.

#### BOOKKEEPING, ALGEBRA, GEOMETRY, AND GEOMETRICAL DRAWING.

The writer mentions the methods of the following authors: For book-keeping, C. E. Pond, Smith and Martin, Bryant and Stratton, Potter and Hammond, Palmer, Fairbanks, Wright, Meservey, Groesbeck, Mayhew, Folsom, and Duff; for algebra, Olney, Davies, Brooks, Peck, Robinson, Bradbury, Eaton, Docharty, Wilson, Hagar, Ray, Loomis, and Perkins; for geometry, Evans, Davies, Brooks, Bradbury, Peck, Hunter, Perkins, Phillips, Robinson, Loomis, &c.

#### PHYSICAL AND NATURAL SCIENCES.

The programmes of study of primary schools in Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, and other countries have long since included notions of natural history, and more recently they have added the elements of the physical sciences. America has followed this example, and this innovation has produced such happy and prompt results in many city and sometimes even in country schools that the superintendents make efforts to spread it. Arguments based on incontrovertible facts are not lacking to them to prove the immense advantage which could be derived from this new branch of instruction. According to their views it is only the continuation and natural development of object teaching.

But it will at once be asked in Europe, as has been asked on the other side of the Atlantic, "Of what use are notions of science to children from six to thirteen years of age? Would it not be better to continue to devote the time to reading, writing, arithmetic, or spelling, for which branches they have really more need?" "This is a mistake," reply the educators who are familiar with this question; "the most accurate statistics establish the fact that the elements of science, far from retarding the progress in other branches of study, unexpectedly further their development; developing in the child a taste for nature and a spirit of observation, they also afford the mind a short but useful diversion."

A few hours a week divided into short lessons of twenty minutes would not cause a great loss of time; moreover, the pupils would be more benefited by the other lessons, for they acquire during these few moments habits of attention and curiosity which follow them in all their other studies.

Indeed, each branch of science the name of which is a bugbear

offers material for lessons as simple as they are useful. All those who know what interest children take in plants, animals, in all that lives, will admit that it is not difficult to give them in an attractive manner the first notions of botany, zoölogy, &c.

Concerning natural philosophy, what is meant by this big word? We need only be concerned to call the attention of the children to natural phenomena which they see every day, and to tell them that these various phenomena are governed by immutable laws.

Is it not necessary to know what we mean by steam, pump, balloon, telegraph, electricity, &c.? Such words occur almost every moment in conversation, especially in a country of industries and inventions like America. These scientific branches ought, of course, not to be profoundly treated during the first school years; instead of attaining the object, it would be missed. To make a display of science in primary schools has never entered the imagination of any practical educator; but one may select for each grade, from the domain of physical and natural sciences, a number of subjects, phenomena, and experiments which it would be easier to explain—and also, let it be admitted, more useful to know—than many rules of syntax or difficult questions in definition with which the grammar bristles; and let it not be believed that this instruction must be reserved for the higher classes of the grammar schools and for the high schools: experience proves that it is possible and even advantageous to begin with it in the elementary classes.

The manner of proceeding in these primary lessons differs, of course, from that of a complete scientific study; one begins with what strikes the eye, with describing the most noticeable qualities of objects; then one accustoms the pupil gradually to observe the simplest phenomena, to analyze them, to compare and classify them. What we have in view above all—it cannot be repeated too often—is not to make the children acquire a definite amount of knowledge, but to familiarize them with the process of observation, analysis, and comparison; in a word, with the whole method of investigation to which the sciences, even in the most elementary stage, constantly appeal.

Apparatus for demonstrations, collections of objects for object teaching, and series of elementary but exact illustrations (charts) are the indispensable means of all scientific teaching in primary schools, and the necessity of these is at present universally recognized. Everywhere charts of natural history begin to cover the walls in the class rooms by the side of geographical maps and the blackboards. In giving a lesson on granite or flint, what picture, what description, will ever equal a real piece of granite or flint? It is also recommended to make collections of mineralogy, zoölogy, and botany in the grammar schools and even in the primary schools. These collections, however modest they may be, will be twice as valuable when they are enriched by the personal efforts of the pupils under the direction of the teacher. It may also be said that the less they cost the more valuable they are; for ten objects hunted

for, found, and classified by the pupils themselves contribute more to their instruction than a hundred specimens bought at a high price.

Thus, as a natural consequence of the above manner of proceeding, the use of scientific books must be very rare in primary schools. Such books are suitable for an advanced systematical instruction, they will be indispensable in the high schools and colleges; but in the elementary schools they would only serve to deprive the child of the sight, the study, the direct observation, of objects and phenomena. The child must have acquired the habit of reading in the book of nature before taking hold of a printed volume.

Here follows a description of the exhibits of New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and other States. The writer mentions the methods of Miss Youmans, Mr. Hotze of Cleveland, Prang of Boston, and others.

#### DRAWING AND THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF METHODS OF TEACHING IT.

In taking a survey of the different parts of the educational exhibition we found many drawings, ranging from the simple sketches of common objects to large colored drawings of machines and buildings, from the small landscape drawn with an ordinary black pencil to the brilliant portrait in water colors or oil; but we found only in the Massachusetts section an ensemble of work which manifests a method, a regular system of drawing. Boston and a few industrial towns of the same State—Lowell, Fall River, Newton, Worcester, New Bedford—sent beautiful drawings produced in the ordinary day and evening schools. We recognized in this work a methodical process, an aim which had been distinctly fixed and strictly pursued.

It is very interesting to read in the report of Superintendent Philbrick for 1874 the history of the introduction of this branch of instruction and the efforts that eminent educator exerted to secure it.

Here follow an extract from Dr. Philbrick's report and the programme for the teaching of drawing in Boston. The writer then quotes from the method of Walter Smith, from the school law passed in New York relative to the teaching of drawing, and from Dr. Wickersham on "Education for work." Finally, he mentions several methods used in American schools, and concludes as follows:

This short review shows with what rapidity a correct idea spreads in the United States. It is hardly six years since Massachusetts inaugurated regular instruction in the art of drawing, and now this plan is quickly gaining ground in all the Northern and Western States, as far as the Pacific coast. Everywhere action is based on the same principles; and the Normal School of Boston will soon send out a swarm of missionaries to diffuse the teaching of drawing similar to those who have gone out in the last twenty years to carry the New England system of education to distant parts of the country. If the last Universal Expo-

sition of Paris revealed a considerable progress in English industry which was due to the artistic movement since 1851 by the great institution at South Kensington, what must not be expected from the American activity stimulated by the Philadelphia Exhibition? Everywhere educators begin to point out what is wanted; they awaken interest, and they find sympathy among professional and industrial men.

Moreover, the same movement manifests itself everywhere; China and Japan join their efforts in the new conditions of art to those of the European nations. France must keep up her preëminence in art, which has hitherto not been contested. France has immense resources which she must fertilize by a well organized primary education. With us, as elsewhere, it does not suffice to have excellent special drawing teachers and good drawing courses and schools; it is necessary that all the teachers should be capable of giving to all the pupils of their classes the first instruction in drawing. France, resuming work after her misfortunes with remarkable energy, must with no less energy devote herself to the study of drawing, and reinvigorate her productive forces at the fountains of art.

#### DRAWING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Chapter XIX describes the methods of drawing in American schools and reproduces a number of the best specimens of drawing exhibited by different schools. The résumé and conclusions are as follows:

The methods of the South Kensington Museum, introduced into America by Mr. Walter Smith, will render as great service to America as they have done to England. Three years ago drawing was taught in a very unsatisfactory manner and in a few special schools only. There were neither models nor methods nor teachers, and now it is made obligatory in many places. Competent European teachers were engaged to give this new branch of instruction a correct organization and an energetic impetus. Several large cities rivalled each other in efforts and sacrifices, and they submitted the results of their efforts to the judgment of the nations represented at the Philadelphia Exhibition. As a whole, these exhibits were very satisfactory, and if we take into consideration the fact that they were the result of two years' trial only, we must admit that such results have never before been obtained in so short a period.

#### SINGING AND MUSIC.

Training in music, the universal language, innate in every one, has always been considered a part of a good education. Nothing is more desirable than to extend it to the primary school. Many European countries have long since introduced singing and music into elementary education; for example, Austria, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and even England, which places to-day the instruction in singing within the reach of everybody, young children not excepted. But it is in the

United States that the most persevering and systematic efforts have been made to render music, and especially vocal music, popular through the school. Singing is obligatory in all the grades of primary schools in the large eastern cities; it is especially well organized in the schools of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and San Francisco. Even in the South, where education is still in its rudiments, singing is often found on the programme of city schools, *e. g.*, at Nashville, Louisville, Shelbyville, &c. Moreover, in places where singing is an optional branch of study, it makes rapid progress from year to year.

Here follows a description of the methods used in American schools and of the results exhibited at the Centennial. In concluding, the writer says:

Does not a great lesson result from all the foregoing remarks? This lesson is, that singing could and should be introduced into the schools, and this not only in the higher classes, where special teachers are employed, but also in the lowest elementary grades. To accomplish this, a knowledge of the elements of music must be made one of the conditions of obtaining a diploma on leaving the school. The example of America proves that, with a preparation which is not very difficult, the pupils who intend to devote themselves to the profession of teaching may become, if not artists, which is entirely useless for their career, at least excellent teachers for beginners. They will often be more successful with young pupils than would accomplished artists, whom the want of patience makes nearly unfit to be good primary teachers.

#### GYMNASTICS.

The writer quotes the opinion of Horace Greeley, Mr. Philbrick's report for 1873-'74, and Dr. Wickersham's *School Economy*. He also mentions some of the schools in which gymnastics are taught and speaks of the movement in favor of introducing gymnastics into the schools.

#### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

The writer gives an account of the origin of the religious question in the United States, of the separation of church from state, and its consequence, the separation of the church from the school. He then speaks of the religious exercises in public schools, of the Bible question and the struggles connected therewith, of the Sunday schools and their exhibit, their literature, their organization, and their libraries, and he finally gives the statistical tables relating to Sunday schools published in the Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1874.

#### MORAL EDUCATION.

The part assigned to the school in the moral education of the young is not the same everywhere. In Europe, especially in France and Ger-

many, the programmes, the regulations, and the very spirit of the schools subordinate moral to religious instruction. Switzerland, Italy, and certain parts of Austria, without actually separating moral from religious instruction, begin to distinguish between them. Their new programmes devote a part to moral education proper. In the United States, circumstances require a complete organization of regular moral instruction, distinct from religious, since religion is excluded from the public schools. Is this want, so generally felt, sufficiently supplied? We do not think it is. No question is of greater importance and more difficult to solve.

We need not repeat the causes which, in the United States, render the moral education of the young at once more urgent and less easy than in other countries. It suffices to call attention to the fact that the family and the church have little power over the young, and that the incessant contagion of vice has a bad influence on public morality. The American school has, under these circumstances, a very difficult task to perform. Fortunately, many eminent educators do not hesitate to call the attention of the American people to this most important question.

Here follows a series of extracts from superintendents' reports.

More than one of the copy books exhibited at the Centennial showed what excessive liberty the pupils enjoy, and how they abuse it. If it is frequently said in Europe that "all respect for authority is disappearing," what must be said of the United States? Pupils do not hesitate to give in their school essays accounts of how they deceive their teacher and to make malicious allusions to the misfortunes of their teachers and parents. We noticed illustrated copy books which did not give a very edifying idea of a class. In one volume, exhibited by the Cincinnati school board, a pupil represented his German teacher as a man with eyeglasses, a pipe in his pocket, an empty bottle, an empty glass, and a tobacco box on his desk, and in the background a black-board with the inscription: "Ich trinke. Ich habe getrunken. Ich werde trinken." (I drink. I have drunk. I will drink.) And in spite of the inconvenience of this disrespect, there are few Americans who would be willing to return to a more rigid system of discipline. There are few who do not see in this liberty, or rather license, a thousand times more advantages than disadvantages.

#### HIGH SCHOOLS.

The writer gives the history of the establishment and development of high schools in the United States, an account of the present condition of several high schools, of the investigations at Cincinnati and St. Louis relative to the occupations of the parents of the pupils, and of the courses of study. He quotes several American opinions relative to the aim of high schools. Concerning the teaching of modern languages he says:



Despite the good impression made by the exhibit of the instruction of modern languages, we do not believe that the American high school has much to teach us in this respect either in regard to methods or to the results obtained. It is difficult for foreigners who only pass through the classes to judge correctly of what is done and to avoid the errors of appreciation which may result from local, personal, or accidental circumstances, the secret of which is seldom explained to them. Nevertheless, after having visited about sixty of the higher classes, where the modern languages are on the programme, and after having almost everywhere inquired relative to the results achieved both in German and French, we must admit that we found scarcely one school in which either of these languages was at all familiar to the pupils, if we except the pupils of German or French origin. Often the French teacher modestly asked to be excused from giving a lesson in our presence; in other cases the teachers who complied willingly with our request knew the rules of grammar, but they evidently had no knowledge of the spoken language; in some cases it was just the opposite. In general, there seems to be more demand for German than for French. This fact, which it is useless to conceal, is explained very naturally by the great numerical superiority of the German population. We may say that from this day the French language will localize and confine itself to the several parts of the Union where there remain groups of Frenchmen or Canadians.

As a whole, the instruction in modern languages is of about the same quality as that of the ancient languages, which is rather mechanical and one sided, and which is characterized by the preference of a speedy method and the acquirement of mediocre results, more for practical use in life than for any other purpose. We do not wish to criticise this method; it is doubtless most suitable for primary and even for advanced schools; we only want to prevent the mistake of exaggerating the intellectual efficaciousness, the educational effect, and the literary value of this mode of teaching ancient and modern languages.

The writer then cites some specimens of lessons in the history of literature, and he remarks:

The study of the older English literature is generally pursued with great zeal. We are far from cultivating in our schools and colleges the ancient French with the same care and the same success.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS.

The writer quotes from the work of Francis Adams on the free schools of America,<sup>1</sup> from the Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1875, and from various programmes and reports of normal schools. He then gives an account of several normal schools, their establishment, their courses of study, and their rules and regulations. Among the institutions specially mentioned are the normal schools of Bridgewater, Mass.;

<sup>1</sup> Free School System of the United States, by Francis Adams. London, 1875.

Kutztown, Pa.; West Chester, Pa.; Terre Haute, Ind.; Winona, Minn.; Ypsilanti, Mich.; the Normal College of New York; the Normal Department of Milwaukee; the Normal School of St. Louis, and the Normal Training School of Washington, D. C.

#### TEACHERS' INSTITUTES—EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

The writer gives an account of the historical development of teachers' institutes in the States of New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, and Iowa. He then quotes American opinions relative to the examination of teachers and extracts from various reports relative to the results obtained. Then follows a translation of examination questions used in different States of the Union.

#### AUXILIARIES TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

We should have but an incomplete idea of popular education in the United States if we considered it as consisting only of three grades of the public schools and their continuation, the normal school. Popular education comprises yet other establishments for a special class of the population and for certain special purposes, such as schools for deaf-mutes and the blind, for the feeble-minded, for orphans, industrial and reform schools, and night schools. The establishment of these institutions is facilitated by the liberty of action which the recognized corporations, as for instance, the boards of education, enjoy, and by the facility with which new associations obtain charters of incorporation. The writer then gives an account of the condition of various such institutions and the statistics thereof.

#### PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Chapter XXVIII discusses the character of private schools in America and seeks to indicate their place in the sphere of general educational activity.

#### SCHOOL STATISTICS.

A country which makes of the public schools its most important national institution cannot be indifferent to school statistics. Public opinion has too much interest in keeping account of the wants, the sacrifices, and the results, not to insist upon frequent information and periodical reports about their condition. There is probably no country which can to-day rival the United States as far as the organization of general school statistics is concerned, especially of primary education. The European nations which commenced a few years ago with considerable energy, are still far from being able to present a collection of works comparable to those of the United States, either in regard to the extent of the researches, the simplicity of the statistical tables which summarize those researches, or the value of the deductions made. It is worthy of remark that the countries in which the administration of public instruction is centralized

have not been the first to organize a regular and permanent system of school statistics. The United States, which seems to have achieved this end the first, is precisely the one which it would seem would be delayed the longest by difficulties apparently insurmountable, viz, an immense territory, incessant fluctuations of population, differences of organization (which are fundamental) between the more than thirty sovereign States, a perfect township autonomy, an incessant change in the personnel of the school authorities, and the absence of all centralized power which might bring harmony if not uniformity into this investigation of school affairs intrusted to thousands of persons independent of each other. These obstacles, however, have not prevented the organization, development, and continuous and general improvement of a system of comparative school statistics which may now be considered in many respects a model. This shows what an imperative necessity it is, in the eyes of a free people, to watch as closely as possible the development of its institutions.

This success in organizing school statistics is due, it seems, above all, to two principal features which have distinguished it from the beginning: first, the way in which it was conceived, and, second, the way in which it has been accomplished. So far from considering this a work of mere administration, designed to interest only a few specialists, the Americans had a clear idea of the result to be obtained, of the motives which made them pursue it, and of the interest which was attached to it. There is but one essential question that interests them, the question "how many children ought to receive, and how many are receiving, the education necessary to an American citizen?"

Here follows a schedule of school statistics, as given in American school reports.

It has not been without the energetic efforts of superintendents that a system of reporting school statistics has been organized. The success is evidently due to the custom of presenting annual reports to the school boards, and by the latter to the public. The school laws make this publication almost everywhere obligatory. Every year, and in every city and State, appear these volumes of pedagogical, statistical, and financial accounts, which are not only distributed to a few assemblies, but gratuitously offered to all who apply for them. They are reviewed in all the journals, discussed in different public meetings, placed in all the libraries, and consulted, long after their publication, by all those who desire to compare the present with the past.

However excellent this long established custom of publishing local school statistics may be, it is not difficult to understand that a great deal remained to be done to organize in the United States comparative school statistics. This want was supplied by the creation of the United States Bureau of Education, the organization of which is described elsewhere. This Bureau, too, was created at the right time; a few years earlier it would doubtless have proved a failure. It was necessary to wait until every State and city had organized special statistics, until the public

was familiarized with the necessity of these periodical accounts. Even after having given public opinion time to reflect, and after the great majority understood by experience the usefulness of this permanent and national investigation of the condition of public education, the American Union has still been the first to create a central bureau of comparative school statistics. Among the federal governments not one has succeeded before the United States in grouping and comparing the results of education in the different parts of the union. Even Switzerland, justly celebrated for its excellent institutions of learning, which ought to have had, it seems, all the means of summarizing quite early the educational affairs of its twenty-two cantons, secured such statistics much later, and less completely, although the United States consists of nearly double the number of States.

It will doubtless be of interest to call the attention of the reader to a fact which seems to be little known to our educators. It is in France that the idea originated which gave birth to the present National Bureau of Education at Washington. One of our most prominent educators at the beginning of the present century, M. Jullien, of Paris, published in 1817 a book<sup>1</sup> which seems to describe, in detail, the American Bureau of Education. M. Jullien says:

"The question is how to organize, under the auspices and special protection of one or several sovereigns and with the concurrence of existing educational societies, a special educational commission consisting of but few members, whose duty it shall be to collect, with the aid of correspondents, the material for a general report on scholastic establishments and on the methods of instruction and education in the different European states.

"Series of questions on every phase of instruction, to be answered on uniform blanks at the same time and after the same method, would gradually, and in less than three years, give us comparative tables of the real condition of education in the European states. It could be easily ascertained what nations are advancing and what are retrograding and what ones remain stationary; what in each country is the weak point, and what are the causes of it; what improvements could be transplanted from one country to another, with such changes as circumstances might render appropriate.

"The science of education, like every other science, is composed of facts and observations. It seems, therefore, necessary to make for this science, just as has been done for every other branch of knowledge, collections of facts and observations, arranged in analytical tables, which can be compared, and from which definite principles and rules may be derived, so that education may almost take rank as a positive science. As

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<sup>1</sup> Esquisse et vues préliminaires d'un ouvrage sur l'éducation comparée et séries de questions destinées à fournir les matériaux de tables comparatives d'observations à l'usage des hommes qui veulent se rendre compte de la situation de l'instruction publique, par M. A. Jullien. Paris, 1817.

comparative anatomy has improved anatomy, so will the study of comparative education furnish new means of perfecting education."

The best proof that this project was no visionary scheme is that M. Jullien went to the trouble to publish, at the end of his work, some series of questions on the actual condition of education and of public schools in different countries compared with each other. These inquiries, which might in many respects be confounded with those sent out by the United States Bureau of Education, cover primary, secondary, superior, and special schools. Under each of these four divisions the inquiry embraced nine series of questions. That relating to the first grade, primary, embraced 120 items.

Such was the plan of M. Jullien, of Paris, in 1817. Seeing that he could not execute his plan in France he tried it in Switzerland, where he was, however, only partly successful. The author would have been much astonished had it been predicted to him that his project would be realized for the first time and on a grand scale in a country the half of which, at the time he wrote, had savage Indians for inhabitants and trappers' cabins for cities.

Here follows a résumé of school statistics as given in the report of the Commissioner of Education.

#### RÉSUMÉ—CONCLUSIONS.

In concluding this report on the scholastic institutions of the United States, the question arises, "What conclusions shall we draw from these investigations? What lessons do they teach us, and what examples do we propose to our country for imitation? What is, finally, the practical result of our mission?"

The answer would perhaps be easy, if scholastic institutions could be compared like industrial inventions, which, recognized as good in one country, are equally good in all other countries. A commission of experts charged with the examination of an apparatus or an establishment must be able to adopt or reject it, as soon as they have seen it work. To draw similar conclusions from scholastic organizations would be very hazardous. The school is not, indeed, an institution which can be studied separately, like a system of railroads or telegraphs. The school is nothing in itself; it is established by the people and for the people, after its own image and imbued with its spirit. It lives through the people, and it has the virtues and imperfections of the people. It is a social institution, inseparable from society itself, and cannot be transported as a whole from one country to another. Had we found the American school system perfect, it would nevertheless be utopian on our part to advise its importation into our country, where it would have to be reconciled with our customs and traditions and with our different social conditions. Under such circumstances the system would soon be found detestable, for it would be, in our country, the corpse only; the soul would have departed.

We have tried to imbue ourselves with the American idea in its application to school life, to understand the organization of the free school system, to catch its spirit, to follow its development, and to note its results. We have tried to judge the American school from an American standpoint, because it is made for Americans, and not from the standpoint of Europe and France, for whom it was not intended.

We offer here a résumé of our personal observations, and not a project of reform based on those observations. The latter task belongs to others. We give the following account as simple reporters.

The American school has, as far as we have been able to ascertain, the following characteristics:

1. The primary school is essentially a national school; it is dear to the people, respected by all, established, supported, and enriched by a unanimous spirit of patriotism, which has not varied for a century; it is considered the source of public prosperity, the chief safeguard and protector of democratic institutions and of republican manners.

2. The school organization is strictly municipal.

3. The supreme control and supervision of primary instruction are intrusted to school boards which are elected and to officers sometimes elected and sometimes appointed by the board; hence result a variety of consequences: the frequent renewal of boards and superintendents; the often deplorable influence of political and local interests; the possibility of sudden changes in scholastic organization; and, finally, the necessity for the people of being informed as to the school questions which they are continually called to vote upon.

4. All degrees of primary schools are gratuitous.

5. The primary school is absolutely unsectarian.

6. Compulsory education, legalized in several States and advocated in several others, had undoubtedly aided in the development of primary instruction, but to what extent it would be difficult to say. The results thus far are not very striking. Moreover, it is impossible to establish compulsory instruction precisely where it is most needed, in the Southern States. Everywhere the most practical form in which it has appeared is the adoption of regulations for compelling truant children to attend school, and, if necessary, sending them to reform or other special schools.

7. Primary instruction, so called, in the United States, is not always limited to elementary studies, but often includes elementary, grammar, and high schools.

8. The scholastic organization (rules, courses of study, division of time, and discipline) is never left to the teacher in cities or localities of any importance, but to the educational boards and superintendents. Teachers are made to conform rigorously to the directions they receive and to use the text books approved by the same authority. All the efforts of educational authorities are directed toward the introduction of this system in the rural schools, which, up to this time, have been left too much to themselves.

9. The training of teachers is everywhere considered as very important. State normal schools are rapidly increasing, and several large cities also have special normal schools or departments for the training of their own teachers.

10. The frequent change of the corps of teachers is unquestionably an evil, at the same time that in some respects it is compensated by the entrance of large numbers of young teachers who are energetic, instructed beyond what is necessary for teaching primary branches, and free from routine.

11. The proportion of female teachers is very large. Classes of boys of all ages are often under female teachers.

12. Coeducation is the rule in American schools. The results of this system are generally reported as excellent, both from a moral and intellectual standpoint; the only or the principal objections expressed apply to the overworking of the young girls which it involves.

13. The American schools offer a multitude of systems of organization, a large diversity of programmes, books, and methods of instruction.

14. The school-houses are comfortably and often extravagantly built and furnished.

15. Great publicity is given to the annual reports of educational officers. The interest which public opinion takes in the development of school statistics and the beautiful and simple organization of the National Bureau of Education do more for the progress and improvement of scholastic institutions than the decrees of an administrative authority with the most extensive powers could produce.

16. Private instruction is free from all inspection or control by the State.

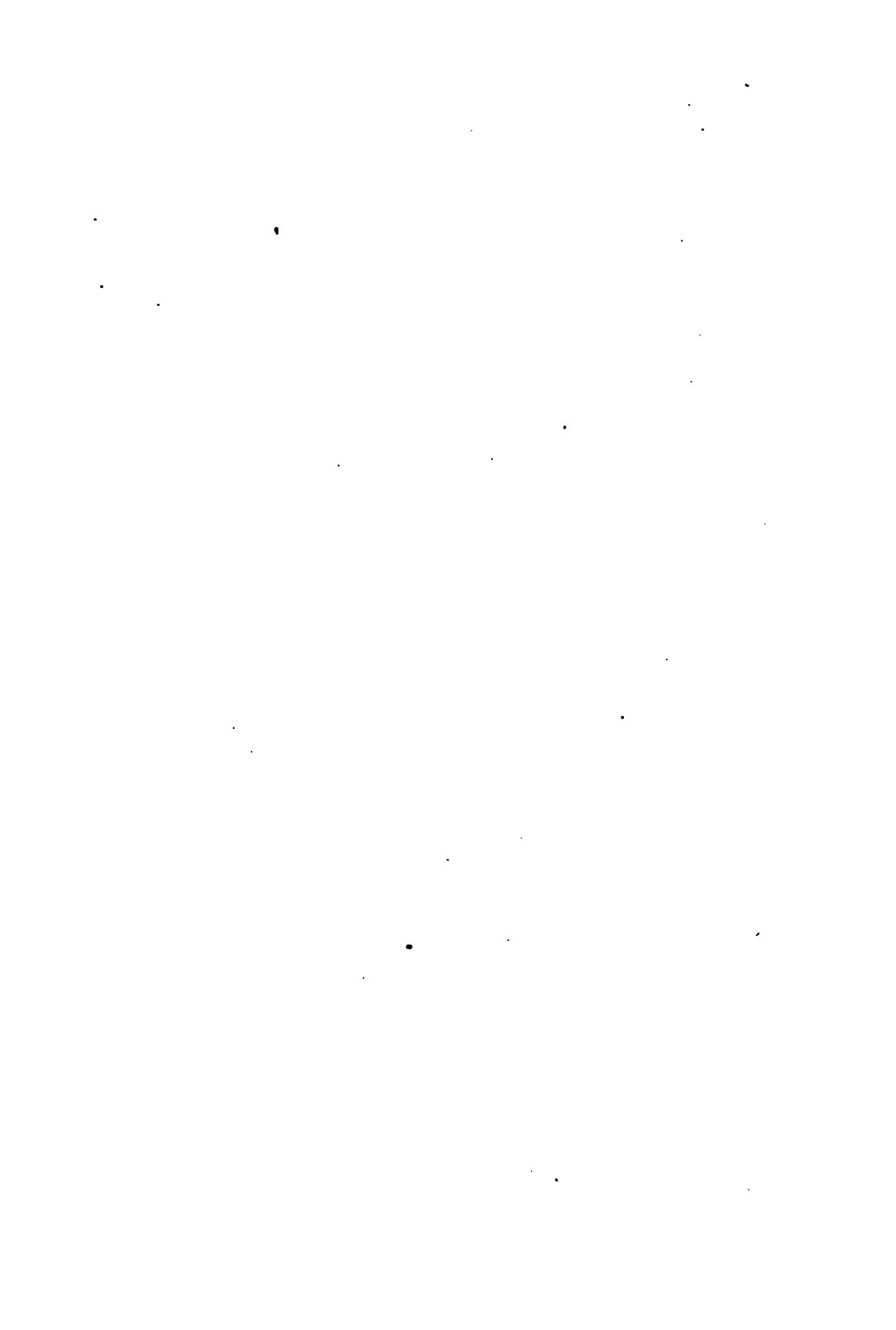
17. Infant schools and Kindergärten generally do not yet make part of the American public school system, though the want of them is felt and is being supplied.

18. The large number of illiterates consist of foreign immigrants and of uneducated negroes in the Southern States.

Here follows a synopsis of rules and regulations on school management, translated from various superintendents' reports.

In concluding, M. Buisson says:

Our mission is fulfilled. Our work will not be vain if only a few pages of this report are read with profit by those for whom they are intended. That has been our whole ambition, and it will be our dearest recompense to furnish our share of useful information to those whose desire it is to see that primary education in France, without imitating that of other countries, should derive enough from the best of what other countries have produced to shrink from no comparison with them.





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